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# Letter dated 12 December 2017 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit a report of the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) on the status of the implementation of the plan for the destruction of Libya's remaining category 2 chemical weapons outside the territory of Libya (see annex). The report, dated 24 November 2017, covers the period from 23 October to 22 November 2017.

The report was prepared in accordance with the relevant provisions of OPCW Executive Council decision EC-M-52/DEC.1 of 20 July 2016 and Security Council resolution 2298 (2016) of 22 July 2016, for transmission to the Security Council.

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) António **Guterres**

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## Annex

[Original: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish]

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith my report entitled "Status of the implementation of the plan for the destruction of Libya's remaining category 2 chemical weapons outside the territory of Libya", prepared in accordance with the relevant provisions of decision EC-M-52/DEC.1 of the Executive Council of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, dated 20 July 2016, and Security Council resolution 2298 (2016), dated 22 July 2016, for transmission to the Security Council (see enclosure). My report covers the period from 23 October 2017 to 22 November 2017 and also covers the reporting requirements of Executive Council decisions EC-M-52/DEC.2, dated 27 July 2016, and EC-M-53/DEC.1, dated 26 August 2016.

(*Signed*) Ahmet **Üzümcü**

## Enclosure

[Original: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish]

### Report by the Director General

### Status of the Implementation of the Plan for the Destruction of Libya's Remaining Category 2 Chemical Weapons Outside the Territory of Libya

1. At its Fifty-Second Meeting, the Executive Council (hereinafter "the Council") adopted a decision on the "Destruction of Libya's Remaining Chemical Weapons" (EC-M-52/DEC.1, dated 20 July 2016) and requested the Director-General to assist Libya in developing a modified plan of destruction of Libya's Category 2 chemical weapons. On 22 July 2016, the United Nations Security Council adopted resolution 2298 (2016), welcoming and endorsing the decision by the Council and requesting the Director-General, through the Secretary-General, to report to the Security Council on a regular basis until the destruction is complete and verified.

2. At the conclusion of its Fifty-Second Meeting, the Council adopted a decision entitled "Detailed Requirements for the Destruction of Libya's Remaining Category 2 Chemical Weapons" (EC-M-52/DEC.2, dated 27 July 2016). In operative paragraph 17 of that decision, the Council requested the Director-General to report to the Council on a monthly basis on the implementation of the decision. This fifteenth monthly report covers the period from 23 October to 22 November 2017.

#### Progress in the elimination of Libyan chemical weapons by the State Party hosting destruction activities

3. Gesellschaft zur Entsorgung von chemischen Kampfstoffen und Rüstungsaltlasten mbH (GEKA mbH), the designated destruction facility at Munster, Germany, completed the destruction of the 2-chloroethanol and tributylamine on 17 December 2016 and 20 January 2017, respectively. The destruction of thionyl chloride was completed on 10 September 2017.

4. As previously reported (EC-85/DG.1, dated 23 March 2017), the destruction of phosphorous trichloride by incineration was suspended as a necessary precaution in order to prevent the refractory coating from severe damage. Destruction by neutralisation began on 12 September 2017. As at 20 November, 109.9 metric tonnes (MT), or 96.7%, of the phosphorous trichloride had been destroyed.

5. Technical Secretariat (hereinafter "the Secretariat") teams, along with Libyan observers, continue to inspect GEKA mbH every two months, with the last such inspection having been conducted from 12 to 15 September 2017. No issues were encountered with the destruction process.

#### Activities carried out by the Secretariat with respect to Libya

6. The Secretariat inspected the destruction operations at GEKA mbH and reviewed the neutralisation of phosphorous trichloride during the aforementioned inspection. The Secretariat was able to witness sampling and analysis of the reaction mass in order to confirm completion of destruction. The inspection team verified the completion of the destruction of thionyl chloride and the ongoing destruction of phosphorous trichloride through on-site confirmation and review of video recordings.

7. The next inspection at GEKA mbH is scheduled to take place from 4 to 7 December 2017. The Secretariat will continue to assess the verification procedures

for the neutralisation process and confirm the destruction since the last inspection. It is anticipated that destruction activities will be completed during the inspection and the Secretariat will generate a final inspection report.

8. As previously reported, the Secretariat was informed that during decanting operations at the Ruwagha storage facility, one container experienced an exothermic reaction, causing the material inside to polymerise. Through an agreement with the United Nations Office of Project Services (UNOPS), destruction of the contents of the remaining container began on 25 July and was completed on 7 August 2017. The Secretariat has confirmed the destruction of the contents of the container.

9. On 29 August 2017, the Secretariat received a letter from His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Siala, the Libyan Minister of Foreign Affairs, noting the approaching completion of its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention and inviting the Secretariat to send an inspection team to Libya. On 19 September 2017, the Director-General informed Minister Siala that the Secretariat was in touch with the United Nations Department of Safety and Security regarding updates to the security situation in Libya. Further to this point, the Director-General noted that the Secretariat is working closely with the Libyan National Authority to develop a plan that would allow the Secretariat to comply with the report of the Council at its Eighty-Third Session (paragraph 6.12 of EC-83/5, dated 11 November 2016), requesting soil samples from Ruwagha.

10. On 20 September 2017, the Director-General wrote to the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security, requesting an assessment of the feasibility of an inspection team traveling to Ruwagha. For further consideration, on 20 September 2017, the Director-General transmitted a letter to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), Mr. Ghassan Salame, informing him of the correspondence from the Libyan Foreign Minister and seeking assistance from UNSMIL in the event of a mission to Ruwagha.

11. On 17 October, the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security replied to the Director-General, noting that the Ruwagha chemical facility is located in the central province of Al-Jufra, which is currently controlled by the Libyan National Army. A "no-fly zone" has been imposed over this region and the United Nations has not been able to obtain clearance for a flight into the area in the last 18 months. The United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Safety and Security recommended that the OPCW first conduct an assessment visit to Tripoli, in order to discuss access to the Ruwagha facility with the Libyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, security authorities, and UNSMIL.

12. A Secretariat team travelled to Tripoli on 30 October to meet with representatives of UNSMIL and representatives of the Libyan Government to assess the viability of a mission to Ruwagha. Discussions revealed the lack of a support structure to provide adequate security for an OPCW team at this time. The Secretariat continues to evaluate options that would allow it to comply with paragraph 6.12 of EC-83/5.

**Overall costs and status of the trust fund**

13. On 1 August 2016, the Secretariat issued a Note calling for voluntary contributions to the trust fund for support to Libya (S/1400/2016, dated 1 August 2016). As at the cut-off date of this report, the trust fund had received over EUR 1.2 million, with contributions having been received from Canada, Cyprus, Finland, New Zealand, and the United States of America. An additional EUR 133,638 was received from Canada in the form of a transfer of funds from a previous trust fund dedicated to Libya. Furthermore, the Secretariat received a

contribution of EUR 20,000 from Spain on 30 June 2017. As at the cut-off date of this report, expenses in the amount of EUR 829,438 had been charged to the trust fund for activities related to the destruction of Libya's Category 2 chemical weapons.

14. The trust fund continues to be used to fund destruction and verification activities related to Libya's Category 2 chemical weapons. The content of the remaining Category 2 chemical weapons container in Ruwagha was destroyed utilising funding from Cyprus, Finland, New Zealand, and Spain.

15. The Secretariat has been notified that the European Union will provide substantial funding for the clean-up operations of the Ruwagha Tank Farm, where 350 MT of highly acidic mustard hydrolysate is stored in corroded and leaking containers, along with other remnants from the former chemical weapons programme.

16. The Director-General would once again like to express his appreciation to those States Parties that have already made or have committed to making voluntary contributions to the trust fund.